



THIS IS FLAGSTAFF

About Our Region

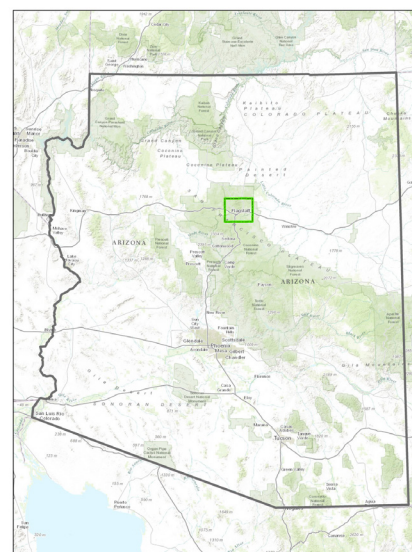
Flagstaff, the largest city in northern Arizona (Map 1), is the regional center and county seat for Coconino County. The City of Flagstaff is nestled at the base of the San Francisco Peaks, which rise to 12,633 feet, and is surrounded by the largest ponderosa pine forest in the country. At nearly 7,000 feet, Flagstaff is one of the highest elevation cities in the United States, with an annual snowfall that rivals cities in upstate New York. The area is rich with cultural diversity, beauty, and history. Outstanding educational, recreational, and scientific opportunities abound.

Flagstaff enjoys a four-season climate with cold winters and mild summers, low humidity, and considerable temperature changes. Summer temperatures are cool, with a short growing season. Summer culminates with the annual monsoon season, with rain and thunderstorms daily during July and August. Winter averages 45 degrees F with 94 inches of snowfall per year. Adequate snowfall plays a key role in providing the economic benefits that arise from Flagstaff's abundant winter recreational opportunities unique in the state of Arizona. While snow may fall in any season and extreme winter snowstorms do occur, Flagstaff is one of the ten sunniest locations in the United States. Local variations in climate play a major role in shaping the range of vegetation communities, ecosystems, and associated wildlife found in the region.

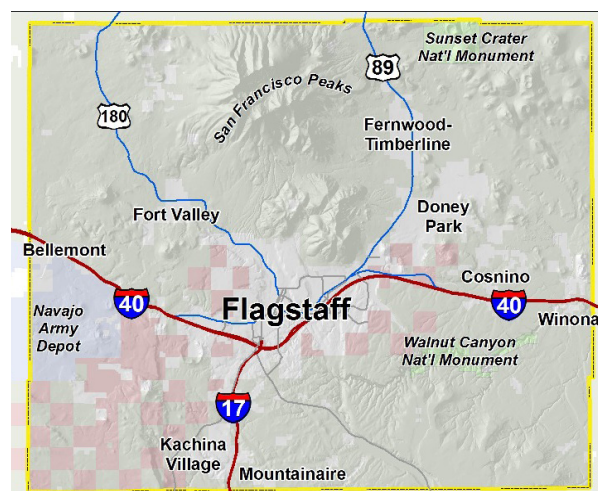
The Flagstaff Regional Planning Area (Map 2) uses the Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning Organization's (FMPO) boundaries, which includes the City of Flagstaff as well as the unincorporated Coconino County communities of Kachina Village, Mountainaire, Doney Park, Winona, Fort Valley, and Bellemont. The City of Flagstaff encompasses just over 64 square miles of the planning area, and is the regional, commercial, and institutional hub of northern Arizona where rural residents including thousands of Navajo Nation and Hopi residents come to shop, seek medical care, and conduct business. Historic settlement patterns created population centers along the railroad, Route 66, and then later along routes to and from the Grand Canyon.

Inside this Chapter:

About Our Region	II-1
Where We've Been	II-2
Where We Are	II-3
Where We're Going	II-6
Growth Constraints	II-8



Map 1: The Flagstaff Region in the State of Arizona



Map 2: The Regional Planning Area: FMPO boundaries

Where We've Been

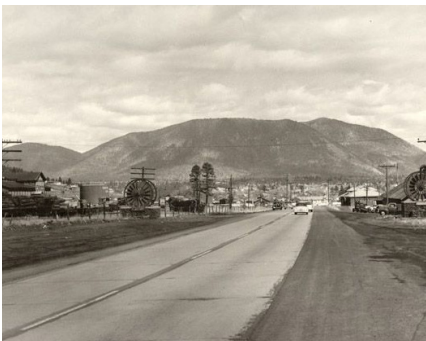


Photo credits: Northern Arizona University Cline Library collection

People began living in the Flagstaff area thousands of years ago, with Native American hunters and gatherers such as Sinagua, Pai, Hopi, Navajo, and Apache ancestors eventually forming agricultural communities. Flagstaff was established because of the construction of the transcontinental railroad in 1882. Because of its fresh water supply and abundant natural resources, the town grew as a railroad hub with the strong economic industries of cattle ranching, sheep herding, and lumber exporting products out of the community. Ranching and the railroad remain vital industries in Flagstaff today. In 1894, Flagstaff was chosen as the location for the Lowell Observatory, where in 1930 Pluto was discovered using one of the observatory's telescopes. The U.S. Naval Observatory Flagstaff Station was established in 1955, solidifying the area as a premier location for astronomical research. The Normal School, a teacher's college, was built in 1899, and now as Northern Arizona University the institution continues to provide ever-expanding higher education opportunities in Flagstaff. The mid-twentieth century interstate highway system transformed the landscape, as Flagstaff was situated along historic Route 66, bringing even more visitors and facilitating a growing tourism industry.

Historically, Flagstaff was a working community, made up of people who understand the land. Native Americans, ranchers, and railroad workers built this city. It is still a blue-collar community with white-collar jobs and jobs in the service sector.



Photo by: Tom Bean - Walnut Canyon Cliff Dwellings - Sinagua Tribe

1855 – Lt. Edward Fitzgerald Beale surveys a road from the Rio Grande in New Mexico to Fort Tejon in California, flying the United States flag from a straight Ponderosa Pine tree at his camp near the current location of Flagstaff

1876 – Thomas F. McMillan builds the first permanent settlement at the base of Mars Hill on the west side of town

1880s – Flagstaff opens its first post office and attracts the railroad, timber, sheep, and cattle industries

1886 – Flagstaff is the largest city on the railroad line between Albuquerque and the west coast

1894 – Massachusetts astronomer Percival Lowell hires A.E. Douglass to scout an ideal site for a new observatory, which later becomes the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, chosen for its ideal elevation

1890s – Flagstaff is located along one of the busiest railroad corridors in the country, with 80 to 100 trains traveling through the City each day

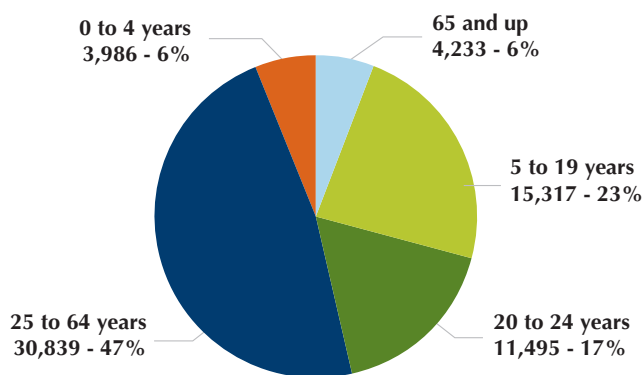
Where We Are

Today, the planning area is home to about 84,000 year-round residents, with roughly 66,000, or 79 percent, within the Flagstaff City limits. This number includes more than 17,000 NAU students, many of whom live year-round in the community.¹

This is a young and vibrant city where we continue to maintain a small-town identity. Flagstaff's median age is lower than the state of Arizona as a whole, due in part to the high student population, and the fact that the area does not attract as many retirees as the rest of the state due to weather and altitude. As such, our young population creates unique demands, opportunities, and services.

¹SOURCE: <http://www.azstats.gov/census-data.aspx>

Population Age City of Flagstaff, 2010



SOURCE: 2010 U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census



Photo by: Jake Bacon

46% of Flagstaff's population is under the age of 25

"These days, as in ancient times, the Flagstaff area continues to attract stalwart, self-reliant individuals who depend not on social graces, but rather on a restricted, sober mentality grounded in a rugged, frontier disposition to forge their daily lives."

- Marie D. Jackson, "The View From Here: Contemporary Essays by Flagstaff Authors"



Photo credit: City of Flagstaff

1899 – Northern Arizona Normal School established, renamed Northern Arizona University in 1966

1899 – Flagstaff Symphony makes its concert debut at Babbitt's Opera House

1924 – President Calvin Coolidge signs into law the Indian Citizenship Act, granting full U.S. citizenship to America's indigenous peoples, partially in recognition of the thousands of Native Americans who served in World War I

1926 – Route 66, running through Flagstaff, is completed

1928 – Flagstaff is incorporated as a city

1928 – The Merriam Report, commissioned by the U.S. government, reveals a Native American existence of poverty, suffering, and discontent

1934 – The Indian Reorganization Act allows Native Americans to return to local self-government on a tribal basis. The Act also restores to Indians the management of their assets (being mainly land) and includes provisions intended to create a sound economic foundation for the inhabitants of Indian reservations.

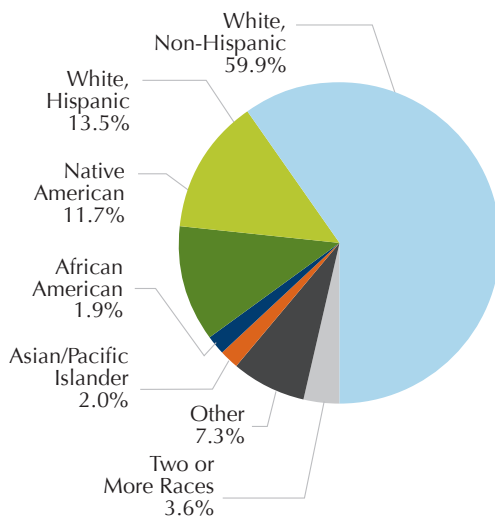


Photo credit: Flagstaff Convention & Visitor's Bureau

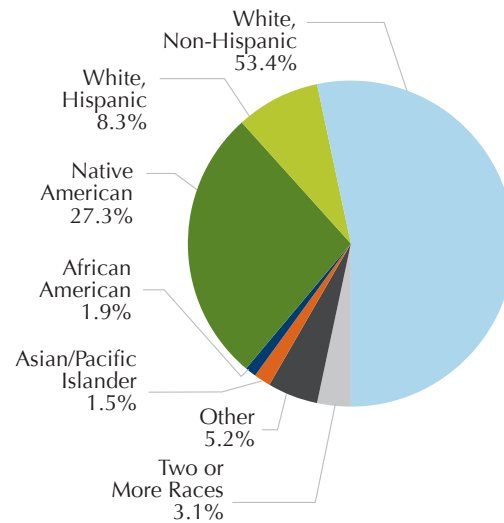
Our region is ethnically diverse, with substantial Hispanic (13.5 percent) and Native American (12 percent) populations. Smaller numbers of African-Americans, Asians, and other ethnicities make up our community. There are six indigenous Native American tribes in Coconino County, accounting for more than a quarter of our population county-wide.

While demographics may change over time, Flagstaff continues its small-town traditions, with a diverse community of people who truly love the land. We are known in many ways—as a college town, a ski town, a mountain town, and an outdoor town—all of which attract an interesting mix of people, in both our workforce and our visitors.

**Ethnicity
City of Flagstaff, 2010**



**Ethnicity
Coconino County, 2010**



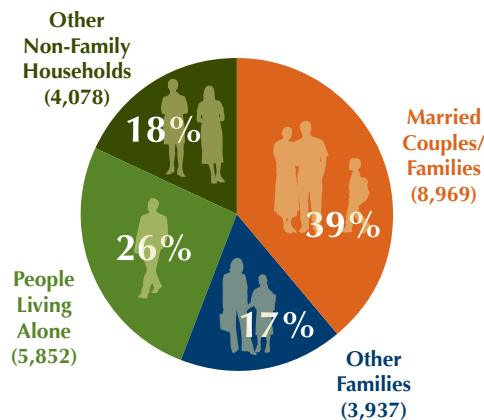
SOURCE: 2010 U.S. Census Bureau

Flagstaff is a community of families, as well as a large number of individuals living alone and other mixed households, again due to our large student population.

The first native residents of this area were the Sinagua and Ancestral Puebloans, who were predecessors to today's area tribes, including the Navajo, Hopi, Hualapai, Havasupai, Kaibab Band of Paiutes, and San Juan Southern Paiutes. This heritage is reflected in many local place names, such as Navajo Road, Sinagua Middle School, and Coconino High School, to name a few. Therefore, the lands in and around Flagstaff are still of significant cultural importance to indigenous tribes, and their descendants still inhabit and continue to contribute to and build the Flagstaff community.

SOURCE: <http://www.azstats.gov/census-data.aspx>

**Household Types
City of Flagstaff, 2010**

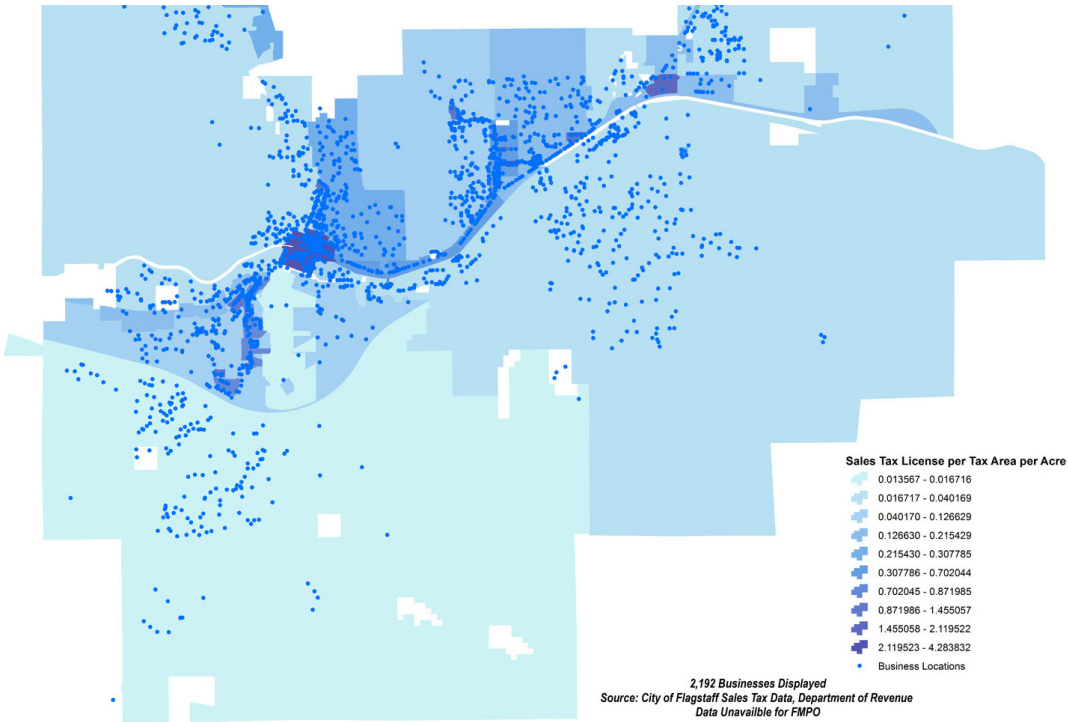


Flagstaff also has a substantial seasonal population, with Census data and City of Flagstaff Housing studies indicating that second homes make up approximately 10 – 18 percent of the total housing stock in the city. In addition, there are over six million visitors to the area annually. People from all over the world come to visit the Grand Canyon National Park, Coconino County national monuments, and cultural and educational attractions such as the Museum of Northern Arizona and Lowell Observatory and the surrounding public and Indian lands such as the Navajo, Hopi, and Havasupai reservations. The region has become a destination of choice for people seeking an active, outdoor lifestyle.



Map 3: Population/
Housing Density

According to City of Flagstaff tax data, there are 2,192 businesses licensed to collect sales tax within the City of Flagstaff (Map 4).

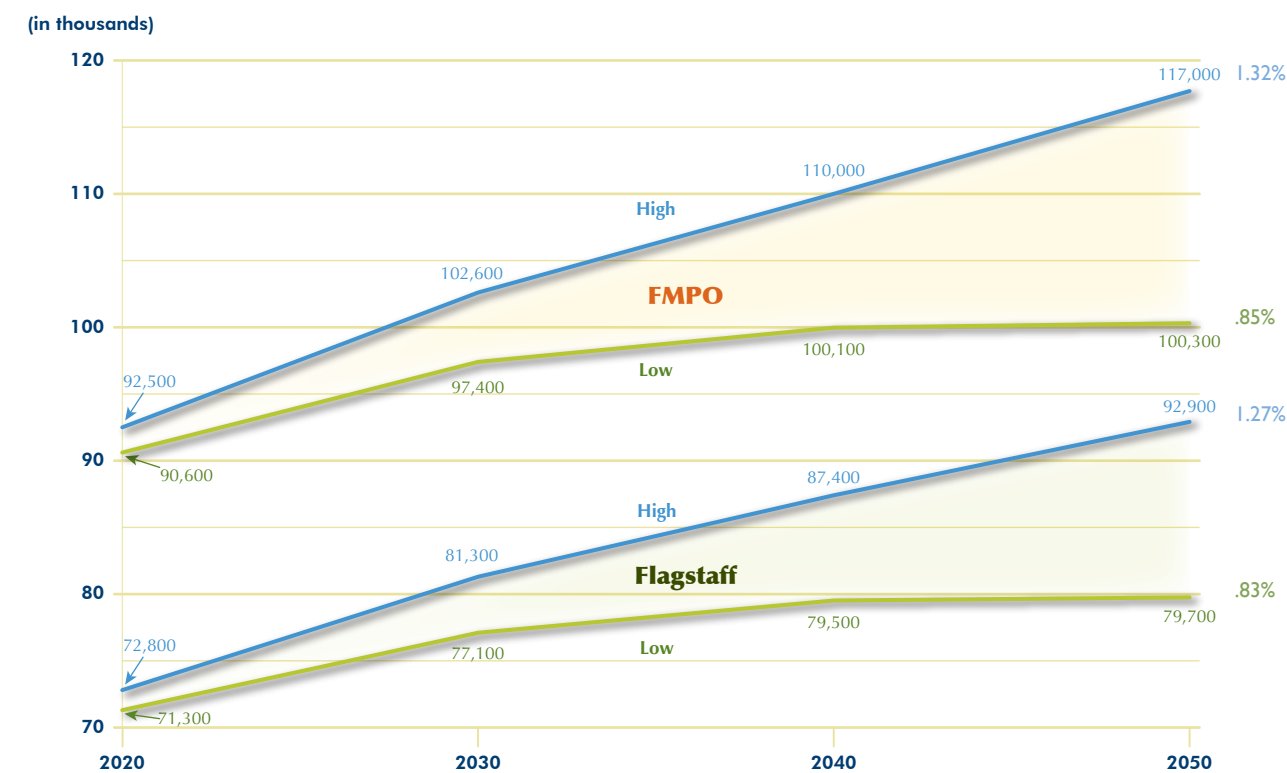


Map 4: Business Density

Where We're Going

The annual growth rate for the Flagstaff region has fluctuated between 2.2 percent in the 1990s and early 2000s, to about 1.1 percent in the late 2000s. Based on these trends, the area's population is expected to grow to 92,500 by 2020 and to nearly 103,000 by 2030. This would mean over 19,000 additional residents in the planning area, the majority of whom would settle in the City of Flagstaff.

Future Population Projections



SOURCE: Arizona Department of Administration, Office of Employment and Population Statistics
 *Flagstaff and FMPO projected populations based on slowly increasing percent of County population including NAU students

Visitation to the region is expected to grow, with nearly 8 million visitors expected annually by the year 2030.

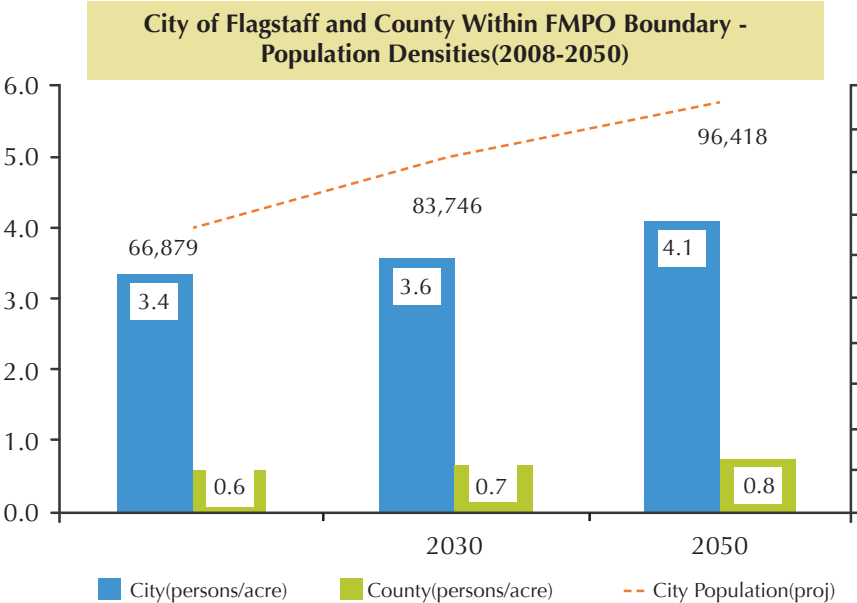
Visitor Population	City of Flagstaff	Northern Arizona Region
2000	2,421,331	6,106,328
2010	2,593,100	6,539,509
2020	2,777,053	7,193,460
2030	2,974,057	7,912,806
2050	3,410,981	9,574,496

SOURCE: Arizona Hospitality Research and Resource Center Survey, 2008.

The City’s densities will slowly increase over the next 40 years, which will provide opportunities for more efficient services and a more walkable community. For example, higher densities are easier to serve with transit and use less water. A focus on growing “in” versus growing “out,” in turn, will protect the surrounding open spaces and the ecological, economic, and recreational opportunities that entails, as well as ensuring that rural living will continue to be an option.



Photo by: City of Flagstaff



SOURCE: <http://www.azstats.gov/census-data.aspx>

Population is the driver for many aspects of a community. With more people comes more needs—more jobs, housing, and public places, to name a few. This is why it is important that we proactively plan for future needs now so that we can sustain the quality of life for our residents—both existing and future. How we build in the future will greatly affect land consumption and our overall community character. How the community develops can also influence the type of people who are attracted to live, work, and play here.

The future workforce will desire to be connected to work and friends in a very efficient manner, by walking, biking, using transit, or electronically. In addition to transportation choices, access to high-speed data will be imperative to tomorrow’s community. The types of employment—occupation and industry mix—will influence salary and wages, affecting the quantity and quality of goods and services consumed in and delivered to the area. The location decision of major employers needs to address transportation options, tax policies, workforce, and land availability, to name a few.

Flagstaff wants to be a more compact city with housing, employment, and transportation options. The region wants to be prosperous, authentic, and a great place to be. As a fair and well-managed city, the future community will reward strong and smart leadership with better jobs, a greater tax-base, and beautiful and sensitive development.

Growth Constraints



Photo by: Tom Bean

People who live and work in the area see the cumulative effects of the region's growth. For many, growth is seen as positive for the expansion of economic, educational, cultural, and medical opportunities, while for others growth is increasingly being associated with negative impacts such as traffic congestion, air and water pollution, loss of open space and traditional agricultural uses, housing choices for the work force, and loss of the "small town feel." While it is true that there are different community perceptions toward growth, this plan realizes that growth is probable and good for our economy and overall community prosperity; therefore, we must acknowledge the following challenges we must face in accommodating this growth.

Land Constraints

Although the area covered by this plan is quite large, less than 14 percent of the land is privately owned. Approximately eight percent, or 42 square miles (26,880 acres), is controlled by the Arizona State Trust Land Department. Within the City limits, there are over 7,000 acres of State Trust Land, 40 percent of which has been identified as suitable for development, and approximately 60 percent has been identified for conservation and open space. The majority of the remaining public undeveloped land is managed by the U.S. Forest Service. Land ownership in the planning area is shown on Map 5. Of the large vacant parcels located within the City limits, a majority are at the periphery and can be considered potential "greenfield development." There also are a fairly large number of smaller parcels scattered throughout the City that are suitable for infill development. In the unincorporated County areas of the FMPO, there are a few large vacant parcels remaining.

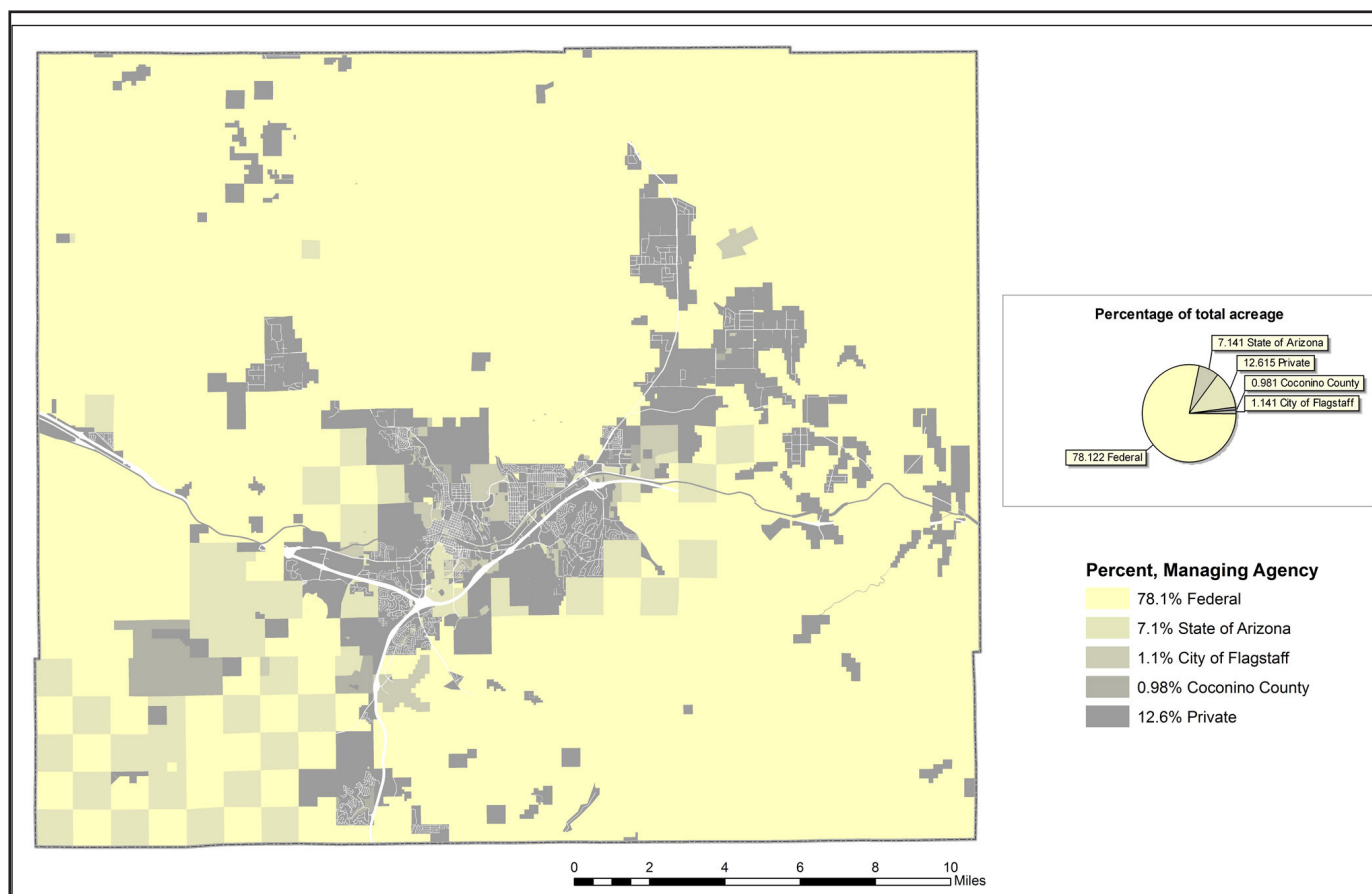
In the 1990s and early 2000s, the population in the region increased by about 1,200 people per year. Accommodating this growth required the

What is Greenfield Development?

When previously undeveloped land is developed, this is known as a "Greenfield development," and it can often be the best examples of sustainability principles in action. Greenfield developments incorporate sustainable programs and technologies such as lifecycle housing, complete streets, parks and open spaces, integrated retail and office, energy-efficient buildings, innovative rainwater and stormwater facilities, and sidewalks and trails.

It is important, however, to ensure that Greenfield developments are not prioritized at the expense of investing into the fabric of existing communities, which can lead to a version of Greenfield sprawl. Municipalities must work to form holistic and even regional strategies for future growth – both infill and Greenfield – so that all future development occurs in a manner consistent with the community plan and vision. Refer to the discussion of Greenfield development in the Land Use chapter for more information.

SOURCE: Sustainable Cities Institute at the National League of Cities (http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/view/page.basic/class/feature.class/Lesson_Greenfield_Devt_Overview)



Map 5: Land Ownership

addition of almost 500 new housing units each year. If 100 percent of these units were in subdivisions with densities matching historically developed subdivisions, or about 3.5 units per acre, this would require almost 150 acres per year to accommodate new growth. That kind of land consumption would rapidly deplete the remaining available vacant private land. This was the reason for the minimum densities that were applied in the 2001 *Flagstaff Area Regional Land Use and Transportation Plan* and why this Plan encourages walkable, compact development in order to curb the effects of urban sprawl.

The Flagstaff region can accommodate future growth by using available land in an efficient and environmentally responsible way. Projections for the ultimate population of Flagstaff and surrounding areas vary. Population projections adopted by the Arizona Department of Economic Security in 1997 showed an anticipated population of the City of Flagstaff of 158,272 in the year 2050. Projections adopted by the state in 2006 show a 2050 population of 96,418 (*refer to pg. II-7*), and more recent estimates are lower still.

If large population growth occurs and accommodations have not been made, local housing and land costs will increase substantially, and newcomers may be forced to move to distant communities, creating sprawl and long commutes to work.

Water Constraints

There has been considerable discussion during the preparation of this plan about the capacity of the City of Flagstaff municipal water system. Estimates indicate that with moderate growth, existing sustainable City water sources can sustain the City until sometime between 2030 and 2035. The City is considering a variety of alternatives to supplement supply. This may come from new wells, increased conservation, and reclaimed processing. Another alternative being explored is Red Gap Ranch, a 7,800-acre ranch between Flagstaff and Winslow purchased by the City in 2005 for future water supplies. Development of this water source would require an energy-intensive (millions of kWh annually) pipeline and major pumping facilities. A fourth alternative would be a pipeline from Cameron to tie in to the proposed western Navajo Nation pipeline. It is not likely that growth will stop as the City approaches its capacity, but more likely that the City of Flagstaff will seek new water supplies like it has over the past 120 years. The City of Flagstaff Utilities Integrated Master Plan (2011) discusses these options in great detail.

Water is not supplied by the Coconino County government. Doney Park Water, a cooperative managed by a locally elected board, provides water to the Doney Park and Timberline-Fernwood areas. With about 3,300 customers in 2010, Doney Park Water has the capacity to provide water to the area at full build out (representing about a 60 percent increase in existing population), assuming there are no major changes in land use or zoning. Kachina Village is served by a water district that also has the capacity to serve the entire subdivision. Private water utilities serve Mountaineer, Flagstaff Ranch, and Bellemont. In Bellemont, additional wells will be needed to accommodate expected future growth. The Fort Valley area is served by private wells and hauled water, and the future is probably water districts with deep wells, of which two have recently been drilled. Many of the outlying county areas also rely on hauled water, and there must be sources for the provision of the water, whether that is the City of Flagstaff or standpipe sales at the rural water companies. Thus far, water has not been a major inhibitor of growth. For a full discussion of water resources, refer to Chapter VI - Water Resources.



Photo by: Sarah Hamilton

Growth Scenarios

The *Flagstaff Regional Plan* followed a land use scenario planning process from 2011-2012, to reflect how growth patterns affect livability indicators such as water use, vehicle miles traveled, development footprint, and housing mix. The land use scenarios represent potential futures for the Flagstaff area at build-out (approximately 150,000 people based on current zoning, plans and water supply projected at 80 to 100 years in the future). The indicator output is based on new growth and development that is anticipated in the region, and is not a measure of existing conditions, nor does it include existing development. For example, the water demand is based on that to be consumed by new development, and not by existing development in the region. Development scenarios are not intended to represent actual futures, but are to be compared against each other so to develop a preferred scenario - the one for which performance most closely aligns with the values of the community as expressed in the vision, guiding principles, goals and policies. Additionally, it is important to understand that these scenarios are based on many assumptions, which may change over the years as the region grows.

Based on public and Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) input, the following land use scenarios were developed for evaluation:

Scenario A: Growing Out

- Development patterns look a lot like today's and utilize the most acres due to lower densities

Scenario B: Growing In and Out

- Development is similar to today's, but with denser activity centers
- Development utilizes fewer acres than Scenario A with smaller lot sizes, town homes and some apartments

Scenario C: Growing In

- Development patterns are denser with urban centers, and uses the least acres due to high densities

Scenario D: Growing In (revised Scenario C)

- Development patterns in activity centers and corridors are higher density than Scenario C
- Development utilizes less acres than Scenarios A and B, however, this scenario includes less single family residential development than any other place type, includes more mixed use development, and introduces some lower density suburban development on the urban fringe.

Scenario E: Preferred Land Use Scenario

Following submittal of the Development Scenarios Summary in June 2012, the *Flagstaff Regional Plan* CAC spent the duration of 2012 and early 2013 refining elements of the Plan, including the land use element. This effort culminated in the release of the draft Plan on March 28, 2013. A “Growth Illustration Map” was included in the draft Plan that generally reflects a revised version of Scenario D, with adjustments made by CAC members and support staff – called Preferred Scenario E. The following example indicators show how well Scenario E performs. One can see that more suburban development means more vehicles miles traveled, greater emissions, and greater water demand. More urban-type development results in fewer vehicle miles traveled, fewer emissions, and less water demand. Refer to Appendix A for full report *Development Scenarios Summary, Flagstaff Regional Plan (June 2013)*.

Example Indicators	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario E
Land Consumed – building footprint acres	699	690	648
Land consumed in wildlife corridors	4,797	3,623	3,135
Acres of consumed unprotected open space	2,340	1,959	973
Cost of developing protected open space	11.2M	8.9M	20M
Mobility – Vehicle Miles Traveled	2,655,340	2,466,875	2,262,498
Housing mix – Single Family / Multifamily (apt & townhome)	20,623 / 7,275	15,140 / 12,612	13,259 / 13,082
Residential Water demand	5,946,143	5,566,229	5,438,536
Population within 1/2 mile proximity to parks	24,228	33,080	36,999
Capital costs to build – leisure, public safety, utilities, transportation, transit	\$5,120,820,000	\$5,221,210,000	\$5,258,950,000
Annual Operation and maintenance costs-transportation + utilities	\$ 9,117,000	\$ 8,585,000	\$ 8,007,000
Property tax revenues	\$ 82,408,000	\$ 80,204,000	\$ 82,896,000
Sales tax revenues	\$ 11,180,000	\$ 11,120,000	\$ 11,030,000